

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 17054

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IT, KN

SUBJECT: NORTH KOREAN DELEGATION VISITS ITALY

1. THE ACTING CHIEF OF THE MFA'S EAST ASIAN POLITICAL OFFICE (CERULLI) HAS CONFIRMED TO US REPORTS WE HAVE HEARD OF A RECENT VISIT TO ITALY OF AN OFFICIAL NORTH KOREAN DELEGATION. THE GROUP WAS LED BY AMBASSADOR JIN (DJIN), THE NORTH KOREAN OBSERVER TO THE UN AT GENEVA AND WAS MADE UP OF A TOTAL OF FIVE MEMBERS. THE DELEGATION HAD REQUESTED VISAS FOR THE PURPOSE OF COMING TO ROME FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH FAO OFFICIALS.

2. AFTER THE DELEGATION'S ARRIVAL, AMBASSADOR JIN MADE KNOWN HIS REQUEST TO MEET WITH MFA SECRETARY GENERAL MANZINI. IN ACCORDANCE WITH COMMON EC POLICY, IT WAS DECIDED THAT HE SHOULD BE RECEIVED AT THE OFFICE DIRECTOR LEVEL. DURING HIS CALL JIN EXPRESSED THE NORTH KOREAN READINESS TO NORMALIZE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ITALY, AND HE ASKED THAT ITALY GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO HIS PROPOSAL. AT THE SAME TIME HE REQUESTED AN APPOINTMENT WITH FOREIGN MINISTER FORLANI. THE ITALIANS ADVISED JIN THAT, IN ACCORD WITH THE COMMON POLICY SHARED WITH ITS EC PARTNERS, ITALY WOULD NOT BE PREPARED EVEN TO CONSIDER DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA UNTIL

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AT LEAST ONE OF THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE IN-

DICATED A WILLINGNESS TO RECOGNIZE SOUTH KOREA. THE REQUEST FOR A MEETING WITH FORLANI WAS TURNED DOWN AS NOT OPPORTUNE. JIN REJECTED THE ITALIAN RESPONSE ON DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AS INVOLVING POLITICAL CONDITIONS WHICH NORTH KOREA COULD NOT ACCEPT. AS FOR FORLANI, HE SAID HE HOPED TO SEE HIM ON A SUBSEQUENT VISIT TO ROME. WHILE THE DELEGATION WAS IN ROME, AT LEAST ONE MEMBER PARTICIPATED IN A PROGRAM ARRANGED BY THE NORTH KOREAN-ITALIAN CULTURAL SOCIETY IN WHICH THE POLICIES OF THE PAK GOVERNMENT AND OF THE UNITED STATES WERE, AS COULD BE EXPECTED, SHARPLY CRITICIZED. (EMBOFF NOTED TO CERULLI DISPLEASURE OVER AN EVENT IN WHICH THE REPRESENTATIVE OF A COUNTRY NOT RECOGNIZED BY ITALY ATTACKS A COUNTRY WITH WHOM ITALY HAS FRIENDLY RELATIONS.)

3. ASKED ABOUT THE STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS ON AN AGREEMENT FOR THE EXCHANGE OF COMMERCIAL REPRESENTATIONS BETWEEN NORTH KOREA AND ITALY, CERULLI SAID THAT THINGS HAD ONCE AGAIN COME TO A STANDSTILL AFTER SOME MOVEMENT THIS PAST SUMMER. NORTH KOREA INDICATED ITS READINESS TO SIGN THE COMPLETED AGREEMENT IN MOSCOW, BUT IN LATE AUGUST, ON THE EVE OF THE DEPARTURE FOR THE SIGNING CEREMONY OF THE ITALIAN DELEGATION, THE NORTH KOREANS CABLED REQUESTING A POSTPONEMENT. SINCE THE ITALIANS HAD ASSURED THE SOUTH KOREANS THAT THE AGREEMENT WOULD NOT BE SIGNED EITHER DURING THE COLOMBO NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT OR DURING THE PRESENT UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION, CERULLI NOW DOES NOT EXPECT ANY FURTHER MOVEMENT ON THIS ISSUE UNTIL 1977. VOLPE

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